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A PROPOSALL Humbly Offered, FOR THE FARMING OF Liberty of Conſcience.

Printed in the Year, 1663.

Papers of Consequence

OF

HAWKINS

Entered in the Year 1993.

A PROPOSALL

HUMBLY OFFERED,

For the Farming of Liberty of Conſcience,

SInce nothing can be dearer unto poor Chriſtians, then Liberty, for the Free Exerciſe of their Judgments and Conſcience, which hath kindled that Fire in the Bowels of the three Kingdoms, which all the pretious Blood that hath been ſhed, during theſe late Troubles, hath not been able totally to extinguiſh; And ſince many of us, whoſe Names are affixed, were ſo profitably Inſtrumental in theſe late Combuſtions, as appears all along in our Sermons before the Honorable Houſe of Parliament, in the Years, 1642, 43, 44, 45, 46. in exciting the good People of this Nation, to ſeek and maintain their Chriſtian Liberty, againſt all Prelatical and Antichriſtian Impoſition whatſoever. And conſidering, that the little Finger of Apoſtacie, from our firſt Love, would be a greater Burden upon our Tender Conſciences then the Loyns of Epiſcopacy, we being more bound in Honour then Conſcience cannot totally deſiſt; Neither need any man fear, or ſo much as ſuſpect, leſt any inconvenience or Alteration ſhould happen in Religion by the great diverſity of Opinions, Tongues and Languages, tolerated amongſt us, unleſs in the great Babel of Epiſcopacy that may poſsibly be pull'd down and deſtroyed by this our notable Confuſion: For if the Goſpel was wonderfully diſſeminated and ſpread abroad by every mans ſpeaking in his own Language, and the very Enemies thereof aſtoniſhed and miraculouſly wrought into a belief of it; how is it likely to be now obſtructed in the free exerciſe of our Spiritual Gifts with theſe our cloven and divided Tongues?

And ſince many Worthy perſons (from whom we might little expect it, but far leſſe deſerve it) out of their Godneſſe and Clemency,

are pleased to incline to some Libertie, did not some persons, Aliens and Strangers to the Commonwealth of Israel take up a reproach against us, as persons reprobated into an impossibility of submission to Principles of Concord, Peace, and Order in Church or State, never being able hitherto to come to any Consistency amongst our selves. the Ark of God having for twenty years together been exposed to High-wayes, Streets, and worse places, for want of an agreement amongst our own Brethren, where to rest it, or how to entertain it.

If this be our Case, and could we be sure of so much favour as Saul once desired of Samuel, That the Bishops would but honour us before the People, we would in a private Christian way lay our hands upon our hearts, and acknowledg the hand of God and the Justice thereof, in turning us out of his Vineyard as wicked and unprofitable servants, and to suffer the iniquity of our heels to overtake us, Crying out with Reverend Mr. Calamy, The Ark of God is justly departed from us: But being not yet thus assured, do hope the people will yet believe these to be only Bears Skins lappt about us by Episcopal hands; And therefore, to the end that a Consistencie and Oneneſſe of Judgment of the whole separating Brethren, and their Moderation may be known unto all men, and that the world may know, there is a spirit of Rule and Government resting in us,

It is humbly Proposed, That the sole power of Granting Licenses and Indulgences for Liberty of Conscience within the Kingdome of England, Dominion of Wales, and Town of Barwick, may be Vested in the Persons under-named, for the Terme of Seven Years, under the Farm Rent of An hundred thousand Pound *per annum*, to Commence from the 25th. day of March next, under such Rates and Qualifications as are hereafter specified.

The Names of the Grand Commissioners and Farmers of Liberty of Conscience; *proposed on yesterday, being Munday,* March 2. 1662. *being the day of a Private Fast kept by Mr.* Calamy, *Mr.* Baxter, *and others, at Mr.* Beal's *house, near my Lord of* Ely's *Chappel in* Holborn.

Mr. *Edmond Calamy*
Mr. *Tilham*, late of *Colchester*
Mr. *Philip Nye*
Mr. *Feake.*
Mr. *Stanley Gower of Dorchester.*
George Fox, Executor of the last Will and Testament of *James Nailor* deceased.
Doctor *Lazarus Seaman*
Mr. *Dell, late of Cambridge.*
Doctor Owen
Mr. *Bryan*, late of *Coventry.*
Mr. *Matthew Mead*
Mr. *John Coppin*
Doctor *Manton*
Mr. *Kiffen*
Mr. *William Jenkins*
Mr. *Fisher*, late of *Kent.*
Doctor *Thomas Goodwin*
Mr. *Hammond*, late of *Newcastle.*
Mr. *Peter Sterry*
Mr. *Bridges*, late of *Yarmouth.*
Mr. *Joseph Carroll*
Mr. *Tombes*, late of *Lemster.*
Mr. *Leigh*, late of *Lumbard street.*
The Executor of Mr. *Venner* lately Executed.
Mr. *Thomas Case*
Mr. *Reynor*, late of *Lincoln.*
Mr. *Raph Venning*
Mr. *Rogers*
Mr. *Benn*, late of *Dorchester.*
Mr. *George Griffith*, late of *Charterhouse.*
The Executor of *Hugh Peters* lately Executed.
Mr. *George Newton*, late of *Taunton.*
Mr. *Dan Dyke*, late of *Hertford-shire.*
Mr. *Mayo*, late of *Kingston.*
Mr. *Joshua Sprigg.*
Mr. *Henry Jessey.*
Mr. *Newcomen* of *Dedham* in *Essex.*
Doctor *Trekney* of *Cambridge.*
Doctor *Cornelius Burges.*
Mr *Zachary Crofton*
Doctor *Holmes.*
Mr. *John Cann*
Mr. *Thomas Brooks.*

That the Persons aforesaid, may be constituted Grand Commissioners, and Farmers of Liberty of Conscience, within the Kingdom of England, Dominion of Wales, and Town of Berwick, and may be impowred to set up one Publique Office within the City of London, and to nominate and elect a convenient number of Registers Clerk, and other Officers: And for the more certainty of all Certificates to be granted as is hereafter appointed, The said Grand Commissioners and Farmers may form a common Seal to be known, and called by the name of The Publique Seal of the Grand Commissioners and Farmers of Liberty of Conscience engraven, An Ass without Ears, Braying, with this Motto incircled Star pro ratione libertas: And the said Grand Commissioners and Farmers, or any 24 of them in the said Office assembled, may from time to time, compound and agree for Liberty of Conscience, with any person or persons, under such Rates and Qualifications, as are hereafter specified.

That the said Grand Commissioners and Farmers, or any 24 of them, may constitute and appoint, under the Publique Seal of the Office, Sub-Commissioners, and other Officers, for every Countie within the said Kingdom, not exceeding the number of 12. for each County whereof 7 to be a Quorum, who may compound and agree for Liberty of Conscience, with any person or persons, select Congregations, Cities, Towns Corporate, Parishes Hamlets, and Villages, by the great, or otherwise, within their respective Countries, not exceeding the Rates hereafter mentioned.

Rates to be observed in all Compositions for Liberty of CONSCIENCE.

	Per Annum.		
A Presbyterian Minister	5	0	0
A Ruling Elder	4	0	0
A Deacon	3	0	0
A Hearer Male or Female in Fellowship to all Ordinances	2	0	0
A Common Hearer only	1	0	0
An Independant Pastor	5	0	0
A Teaching Elder	4	0	0
A Helper in Government	3	0	0
A Deacon	3	0	0
A Hearer male or female in Fellowship to all Ordinances	2	0	0
A common Hearer only	1	0	0
A Baptist admitted to the Administration of all Ordinances	5	0	0
A Preaching assistant	4	0	0
An Elder in Office	3	0	0
A Deacon	2	0	0
A Hearer in Fellowship male or female to all Ordinances	2	0	0
A common Hearer only	1	0	0
A Fifth Monarcher admitted to hold forth	5	0	0
An Elder under the same Administration	3	0	0
A Deacon under the same Administration	3	0	0
A Hearer male or female in Fellowship according to the value of his or her Estate 2 s. *per l. per annum*			
A common hearer male or Female according to the value of his or her Estate 12 d. *per l. per annum.*			
A Speaking male Quaker	4	0	0
A Speaking female Quaker	3	0	0
A common Quaker male or female	2	0	0

A Confeſſor	6	0	0
A Seminary or Maſs-Prieſt at large	5	0	0
A private Maſs-Prieſt	4	0	0
A Roman Catholick in any other order	3	0	0
A Roman Catholick not in order male or Female	1	0	0
An Officer under any Adminiſtration not mentioned in the rates aforeſaid being a Native of England, ſuch only excepted as ſtand Conformable to the Church of England	5	0	0
A common perſon under any Adminiſtration not mentioned in the rates aforeſaid being a Native of England, ſuch only excepted as ſtand conformable to the Church of England	2	0	0
An Officer under any Adminiſtration whatſoever not a Native of England, except conformable to the Church of England	10	0	0
A private perſon under any Adminiſtration whatſoever not a Native of England, except conformable to the Church of England	5	0	0

Rates to be obſerved in compounding for Liberty of Conſcience in the particulars following, viz.

For Liberty to aſſert the Popes Supremacy	10	0	0
For Liberty to write, ſpeak, or Preach againſt the Government as they ſhall be inwardly moved	5	0	0
For liberty to keep on their Hats before Magiſtrates, or in Courts of Judicature	2	0	0
For Liberty to rail publickly againſt the Biſhops and Common Prayer	1	0	0
For Liberty to refuſe all manner of Oaths, of Allegiance and Supremacy, or in Caſes Civil or Criminal	2	0	0
For liberty to deny Tythes and other Church Duties	1	0	0
For liberty to expound the *Revelations* and the Book of *Daniel*	1	0	0
For Liberty to diſturb any Congregation after Sermon	0	10	0
For Liberty to aſſert the Solemn League and Covenant	1	5	0
For Liberty to inſtruct youth in the ſhort Catechiſm ſet forth by the Aſſembly of Divines	0	10	0

That any perſon or perſons gifted for any the Particulars abovesaid, may have liberty therein either as an Itinerate, in private or publique, at the Rates abovesaid.

That no perſon or perſons be admitted to compound for Liberty of Conſcience, until he or they have firſt taken and ſubſcribed the Solemn Proteſtation following, before the ſaid Grand Commiſſioners and Farmers, or their Sub-Commiſſioners reſpectively.

I A. B. do here solemnly protest, That I judg my self still bound by the Solemn League and Covenant, by the Engagement, by private Church-Covenant, or by any other Oath which I have taken ever since the year 1641. and that so far as with safety to my person and Estate I may, I will endeavour the utter extirpation of Episcopacy, and to the utmost of my power, will abet and promote all Schism, faction, and discord, both in Church and State, according to the best form and manner, prescribed and laid open in the Sermons of many of the Grand Commissioners and Farmers, before the Parliament, appointed to be *P*rinted, and now called the Homilies of the Separated Churches. And that I will never by what Conviction or Authority soever, whether legall or Episcopall, ever consent to the Establisht Doctrine and discipline of the Church of England.

And I do likewise believe, That Liberty of Conscience was a Mysterious, yet profitable talent committed to the Churches, and that it may be lawfully Farmed out for advantage and improvement.

That no person within the Kingdom of England, Dominion of Wales, or Town of Barwick, may, from, and after the 25 day of March next, use or exercise any manner of Liberty of Conscience, except persons standing conformable to the Church of England, untill such person or persons shall first take the Solemn Protestation, and shall compound with the said Grand Commissioners and Farmers for Liberty of Conscience, nor shall he be admitted or permitted to be a Speaker or Hearer, in any Meeting or Assemblies whatsoever.

That the said Grand Commissioners and Farmers of Liberty of Conscience, may have power to constitute under the Publique Seal of the said Office, a convenient number of Spiritual Gagers, who may have and exercise all such Powers, Priviledges, & Authorities, as the Gagers for Excize of Beer and Ale, have, or ought to have and enjoy, and may at any time, in case of Suspition, enter into any house or place, publike or private, to gage and try the Spirits and Affections of any person or persons; and by Praying, Preaching, or other good Exhortation, dissuade from Episcopacie, and the Common-Prayer, the better to fit and prepare them to compound for Liberty of Conscience.

That the said Grand Commissioners and Farmers of Liberty of Conscience, may have power to fine any person or persons (not exceeding the sum of 20 l. for every offence, who shall, after Composition for Liberty of Conscience, and subscribing the Solemn Protestation,

on, be present in any Church or Chappel within the Kingdom of England, Dominion of Wales, and Town of Berwick, in the time of any part of Divine Service, unless at the Funeral of his Father or some other like occasion: or, if being present at any such occasion, he shall either respond, be uncovered, or carry himself reverently, in the time of Divine Service aforesaid.

That the said Grand Commissioners and Farmers of Liberty of Conscience or any 24 of them assembled at the Office aforesaid, may have and exercise a Jurisdiction of Appeal in all matters relating to Liberty of Conscience, within the said Kingdom of England, and shall have a conclusive power in all matters brought before them, by way of Appeal as aforesaid.

That for the better management of all such matters as shall be brought judicially before the said Grand Commissioners & Farmers of Liberty of Conscience by way of Appeal the said Grand Commissioners and Farmers, shall have power to constitute and appoint Mr. Oliver St. Johns, and such others as they judge fit for their said Service to be of Standing-Council with the said Grand Commissioners and Farmers: And the said Mr. Oliver St. Johns, being so constituted and appointed under the Publick Seal of the said Office, shall, and may be exempted and discharged from being in any Publike Office, or place of Trust or Profit, for the said term of 7 years, any thing to the contrary notwithstanding.

That if any person or persons shall happen to be proceeded against in any of the Ecclesiastical Courts of the Bishops of this Kingdome for Contumacy, for Non-Conformity, for non-payment of Tythes, and other Church-Duties, for publick raylings against the Bishops, the Common-Prayer, or the Government of the Church of England, or shall speak Opprobriously or Scandalously against the Doctrine or Discipline thereof, as Antichristian, or shall maintain any Positions or Doctrines contrary thereunto: Every such person producing a Certificate from the said Grand Commissioners and Farmers under the publike Seal of the said Office, that such person or persons are under Composition for Liberty of Conscience, shall actually be discharged, and all further proceedings stayed; Any thing to the contrary notwithstanding.

That if any persons shall happen to be Indicted or Criminally proceeded against in any of His Majesties Courts at Westminster, or elsewhere within the Kingdom of England, either for Treasonable Speeches or Practises, for publike raylings at the Government, or for Scandalous words against either or both Houses of Parliament, or for Transgressing any of the Penal Laws and Statutes of this Kingdom; Every such person or persons producing a Certificate from the said Com-

Commissioners and Farmers under the publike Seal of the said Office, that such person or persons are under Composition for Liberty of Conscience; and that such words or practises were not spoken or acted maliciose, but were only the natural and proper effects and product of Liberty of Conscience, shall be discharged, and all further proceedings stayed; Any thing to the Contrary notwithstanding.

That the said Grand Commissioners and Farmers of Liberty of Conscience, may have power from time to time to Ordain Pastors, Elders, and Deacons, or any other Officers under any Administration whatsoever, by the laying on of the publique Seal of the Office: Which said Imposition of the said publique Seal being received with a Certificate, shall be as lawful an Ordination, as if every such person had received Imposition from the hands of the Presbytery, Any late Usage or Custome to the contrary notwithstanding.

That the said Grand Commissioners and Farmers may have power from time to time, to set apart dayes for publique Fastings, and Humiliation and Thanksgiving; on which dayes it may be lawful for any person or persons appointed to Officiate before the said Grand Commissioners and Farmers, to stir up the people to a holy Indignation against themselves, for having by their want of Zeal and Brotherly kindnesse one towards another, lost many pretious enjoyments; and above all, the never to be forgotten Losse of the late Power and Dominion, which with the Expence of so much Blood and Rapine, was put into the hands of the Saints. And to take up for a Lamentation and great thoughts of heart, the Divisions of Ruben, That having our Sacks full, such an evill spirit should be found in the midst of us, as to fall out by the way; might it have been with those that abode by the Stuff, as with those that went out to the Battel, it had not been with us as at this day. Some starting aside, like a broken Bow, in the year 48; others continuing to bear the burthen and heat of the day untill 60, being harnes'd, did then turn their backs in the day of Battel; as was most sweetly handled at the Fast kept Yesterday at Mr. Beale's, by Mr. Callamy, Mr. Baxter, and others.

That the twentieth day of April next, commonly called Easter-Monday, be kept as a day of Solemn Fasting and Humiliation, for a Blessing upon these Gospel-------Undertakings, and that Mr. Edmond Calamy, Mr. Peter Sterry, Doctor Lazarus Seaman, and Mr. Feake, be desired to carry on the Work of the Day in Prayer and Preaching, before the said Grand Farmers, and that the particulars following, be recommended to their Consideration in the Work of the Day.

1. To Bewail,
   1. All our Court Sins.
   2. Our Bishops Sins.
   3. Our Monk Sins.
   4. Our Common-Prayer Sins.

2. To Divert,
   1. Westminster-Hall Judgments.
   2. Our Old-Bayly Judgments.
   3. Our Tower-Hill Judgments.
   4. Our Charing-Crols Judgments.
   5. Our Tyburn Judgments.

Lastly, For deliverance from the Hand of Dun, that uncercumcised Philistine.

That the said Grand Commissioners, and Farmers of Liberty of Conscience, may have power to build Churches and Chappels in any place or places, except upon such Ground only where Churches or Chappels do already stand, in regard of the inconvenience of setting up Altar against Altar; And forasmuch as the Custom of Reading some part of the holy Bible before Sermon, commonly called first and second Lessons, hath been found fruitless, That therefore the said Grand Commissioners & Farmers may have power to appoint instead thereof, the Annual reading of those Sermons preached by many of the said Grand Commissioners and Farmers, before the Parliament, Upon special Occasions of Thanksgiving and Humiliation, from the Year 1641, to the Year 1648: Which said Sermons may be called, The Homilies of the separating Churches.

That the said Grand Commissioners and Farmers may have power to require Mr. Gilbert Millington, and Mr. Luke Robinson, the lame Evangelist, to deliver up all such Articles, Orders, Books, Papers, and other Writings, as were transacted before the late Committee for plundered Ministers; and likewise, all such as were passed and transacted before Mr. Philip Ney, and some others of the now Grand Commissioners and Farmers, and heretofore called Commissioners or Spiritual Tryers, to the end, the said Articles, Orders, Books, and other Papers may be Printed and Published, and may be kept at the said Office upon Record for ever, and appointed to be the Book of Canons of the separated Churches.

All this being done, we may upon Scripture Grounds expect, that the door of Hope may yet be open to Us, and Our Children after Us, to

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see the travell of our Souls, and to lett Us into the promised Land, and to reap some of those Clusters of the Grapes of Canaan, which with so much Labour and Toyl of Body and Mind were planted, especially in the Years of 1641, 42, 43, 44, 45. by many of Us, and other precious Saints and Ministers of the Gospel, who are since fallen asleep, and have, We hope, reaped the Fruits of those Labours, the Lord having in that Day put a mighty Spirit into Us, & set Us as Watchmen upon the Towers of Israel, to cry mightily, Curse ye Meroze, Curse ye bitterly; the Lord Grant, That those Heart-breaking Labours of Ours, those King-destroying Labours, these Kingdom-ruining Labours, those Gospel-scandalizing Labours, those Church-subverting Labours, those Soul-confounding Labors of Ours, may never be forgotten, but may be written as with the point of a Diamond, upon the Heart of the King, upon the Hearts of the Bishops, upon the Heart of the Parliament, and upon the Hearts of all the People from Dan to Beersheba, that so in Gods good time we may receive our Reward seven fold into our own Bosomes, and that the Generations to come may hear and fear, and do no more so wickedly.

So prayes,

B. G.

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